



PROPOSALS

For an UNDERTAKING to manage and produce RAW-SILK, of the Growth of England; and to Raise a FUND for the carrying on the same, pursuant to a PATENT granted to JOHN APLETRE, Esq; under the Great Seal of England. Dated the 23d Day of May, 1718.



It might be sufficient to any Man who may doubt the Practicableness of this Undertaking, to tell them, That my Lord Chancellor has affix'd the Great Seal to the Grant of an exclusive Power to undertake it; and this more especially, because it is universally known, that his Lordship is very nice in his Enquiries into Things of this Nature; very backward to pass such Grants without Demonstration of the Abilities of the Proposers to perform, and of the Practicableness of the Thing proposed; and a very good Judge of those Demonstrations when offer'd to him: And Lastly, that in the present Proposal his Lordship not only did enquire critically into all these Particulars, but received full Satisfaction from the Undertaker.

BUT because Men love to see with their own Eyes; and that it is most reasonable that the Undertaker should remove all the just Objections he can foresee may be raised against his Proposal, he humbly offers the following Consideration to the World, by which the Usefulness first, then the Practicableness, and lastly the Profits of the Undertaking may undisputably appear.

THE Produce or Growth of every Country is the great general Article, from whence any Place is denominated fruitful or barren, rich or poor Manufactures, Scitnation of Place, Industry of People, Commerce, Navigation, &c. are the Improvers and Increasers of Wealth; but Variety and Quantity of the Produce of the Soil or Growth of the Country is the Fund of Wealth, from whence all Improvements begin, and upon which Industry and Commerce may be said to live.

To say it is injurious to Trade to produce this or that Commodity, and that it were better for us to fetch it from Abroad, at the Expence of Carriage, and at the Price of its Costs, when Nature offers the same Commodity to our own Industry, and tells us our own Country shall produce it *gratis*, is to talk a Language inconsistent with the Interest of our Country, and indeed, is Nonsense in it self; since it is an undeniable Maxim in Trade, that no Country ought to buy from Abroad what their own Soil can produce, or their own People can manufacture at Home.

It is out of Question, that we not only fetch from Abroad, and purchase from Strangers, great Quantities of Raw-Silk, but that we Import great Quantities of Wrought-Silks manufactured Abroad: The demand for Silks of all sorts is so great here, that all the Silk Wares manufactured here are not sufficient to supply us.

If there were no Silk at all wore in *England*, but all our People would be content to propagate our own Woollen Manufactory, there would then be no room to dispute, because the Question would then lye between the Silk that is the Produce of Foreign Countrys, and the Wool which is the Growth of our own: But since Custom and the Wealth of our Inhabitants has introduc'd the wearing of Silks, and that to so prodigious a Quantity, the same Reason makes it most just, that if it may be produced in and made the Growth of our own Country we should not buy it from Abroad.

NOR is the Pretence of its being Imported in return for our Woollen Manufactures of any Weight in this Case, since 'tis evident, First, That our Woollen Manufactures are not actually barter'd in Exchange for Silks, but both are bought for Money; nor are the Persons always the same, but the Money is taken of one Dealer for our Manufactures, and laid out with another for the Silk, without any Relation one to the other.

ON the other Hand, could the Raw-Silk be once produced here, we should not only have our own People employ'd, immense Sums of Money kept at Home, with which we now purchase our Raw-Silk, but should Export great Quantities to *Holland*, *Germany* and other Places, and return very great Sums of Money to the effectual turning the Ballance of Trade against our Neighbours, as well *Dutch* as *French*.

It remains then, to enquire into the Practicableness of the Thing, and this is the Substance of the Undertaking: nothing is more undeniable than what may be done in little may be done in great, what one can do another may do.

THERE are many Familys where the Children have made the Experiment of keeping and nourishing the Silk Worms, and (the young Ladies especially) have often seen the Produce of it. They have seen the little Industrious Creatures (the Silk-Worms) feeding on a very small Quantity of Mulberry Leaves, first grow to its mature Bulk, then ceasing to feed, wrap it self up in its miraculous Webb, spin out its own Bowels, come out a Fly, lay its Eggs for a new Generation, and so having finished its useful Life, fly away and dye.

THIS Experiment proves, that not the uncertainty of our Climate, nor the Cold nor the Wet (which is its worst Enemy) nor the want of Warmth. In

a Word, nothing but the want of its Food is the reason why we may not have as many Silk-Worms in *England* as we have Muck-Worms (asking Pardon for the Expression) that is to say, as we have or may have of any other Creature which we have occasion for.

THE next Thing then is to enquire whether the Mulberry-Tree will grow in *England* to as great Perfection as in other Countries ; and this is evident by observing to what vast Bulk those few we have in *England* do grow, and how easy it is to raise what Quantity of them we please, and that in a much shorter time than some at first sight may imagine, which leads to the main Objection (*viz.*) That a Mulberry is a Tree of a slow Growth, and long coming to Perfection.

THIS is answered in a Word, and that past Contradiction (*viz.*) That although a Mulberry-Tree may be long coming to the Perfection of a Tree to bear Fruit, it is not so long coming to bear Leaves : And as it is the Leaves that is the Fruit in the Case before us, it is easy to prove, and many Gardners have made the Experiment, how great a Number of young Branches an old Stool or Sow (for so the Gardeners call a Tree whose small Twigs they lay or stick down in the Earth for Encrease) will even in two or three Years time produce.

So that in a Word, 'tis out of Question, that whole Gardens or Orchards, nay Woods of Mulberry Trees (especially white Mulberry Trees, which grow as quick as Lymes) may be produc'd in a very little time, if Encouragement were given to plant and encrease them, one large Mulberry Tree being capable of raising a great number of Trees from it, which shall all bear Leaves, and be capable of being removed and set by it self in the first Year.

NOR is it Impracticable even to dig or plough the Ground and sow the Seed of the Mulberry as they do Acorns, or the Berrys of the Holly Bay, *Philterra* Yew, or any other Trees ; which Seed would bring Leaves even the first Year, and encrease, *ad infinitum*.

As then it is thus evident, that the Creature called the Silk-Worm will live, thrive and spin its Webb out here to its due Perfection, if it can but be supply'd with Food ; and this Food is so easy to be produced as indeed nothing can be more easy and natural ; it must then be some wonderful and surprizing Objection that must come in the way of the Design in hand, to perswade People to believe that Raw-Silk may not be produced in this Country as well as in any Country whatsoever.

Mr. *Evelyn*, in his *Sylva*, discoursing of the Mulberry Tree, and of the profitableness as well as practicableness of this Operation, gives us an account of one Mulberry Tree that fed so many Silk-Worms with its Leaves as made seven Pound weight of Silk, and I quote him as an Author of unquestioned Probity and Authority : And from his Authority I argue thus,

IF one Silk-Worm may be preserved and the Silk preserved, as many may be so preserved as there can be Leaves procured to feed and keep them with.

If one Tree nourish'd Silk-Worms sufficient to make seven Pound of Silk, then as many seven Pounds of Silk may be produced as Trees of that Bulk may be procured; and from thence the Profit of the Undertaking will be most regularly calculated.

THE Price or Value of seven Pound of Silk is easily understood, and we may without making great Allowances for the difference of Prices on one side or other, esteem it about one Pound Sterling Money, for one Pound weight of Raw-Silk.

Now the Expence of this is raising the Tree; and managing the Silk, and nothing else; so that without entring into Particulars, 'tis evident that the Profit of this Undertaking, managed to a sufficient Degree, will make an encrease beyond all the Trades now to be undertaken in the knowledge of Man in the World.

As to the managing of Silk-Worms, directing and bringing to perfection the Work it self, this is what lies upon the Undertaker; and the first thing he has to say on that Head is this (*viz.*) That as he is well assured of his own Experience, Judgment and Capacity for the Managing, and of the Certainty of the Profit in the Performance, so he gives this unanswerable Proof, That he has good Grounds to be assured of it, that he does not (as has been the Custom of most Projects) attempt to get Money in his Hands from the Subscribers on Pretence of Advance, or of Expences in the Undertaking, or on any other Account whatever. But having a full Satisfaction in and Dependence upon the Goodness of the Design, he is willing to adjourn all his own Expectations to the Experiment, and to wait for all the Advantages he is to receive 'till the Thing it self shall give him Encouragement in Common with the Subscribers.

AND tho he has been at great Expences in the Experiment which he has made, in the time he has spent upon it, and in procuring the Patent; yet he asks nothing to be paid or advanced to himself, but is wholly resolved to give his Labour and Expences, and to share no Profit 'till the Adventurers shall see it produced from the just Produce of the Undertaking.

NOR does he propose the Shares or Parts, into which for the Conveniency of the Adventurers, he divides the Interest of the Undertaking to be valued high, or the Sum to be adventured great, that a great Sum may be Collected to prepare Work for Stock-Jobbers, and a Bait for Embezelment.

BUT reckoning the Shares only at 5 *l.* Share, and only 1 *l.* per Share to be paid in at first to set on foot the Undertaking; the hazard of 20 *s.* is so small, and the prospect of Advantage so great, that he cannot think there is any room for Objection.

ALSO, even this 20 *s.* to be paid in; The Undertaker, to remove all Objections, resolved not to have it put in his Hands, or any part of it, but reserved for such Persons to be intrusted with as the Subscribers themselves shall choose; and the Money Subscribed to be laid out as the Directors shall appoint in buying Land and Trees to plant on it, which will be a perpetual Security for the Subscribers, not only during the Term of the Patent, but for ever.

THE

THE Proposals or Articles are as followeth, and are contained in a Deed of Trust, enrolled in Chancery, to which Relation being had may more fully and at large appear. Whereas it is contrived that the Sum of 25000*l.* will be necessary to be subscribed, and paid in for buying Lands, making Plantations upon them, building of Houses for the Reception of Hands to be employed in this great Work, and for the improving this new Invention : Which Sum is proposed to be raised by Subscription of 5000 Shares, at 5*l.* each Share, to such Person or Persons as shall voluntarily come in and subscribe for the same, in a Book or Books of Subscription to be opened for that purpose; subjected nevertheless to the Terms, Covenants, Provisoes, Conditions and Agreements herein after mentioned, viz.

IMPRIMIS, It is consented, concluded and agreed upon, this 11th Day of *October*, 1718. By and Between the said Patentee and such Persons as shall voluntarily subscribe for any Shares in Manner hereafter mentioned. That on or before the First Day of *November* next after the Date hereof, one or more Book or Books shall be opened at the House of Messieurs *Thomas Gibson, John Jacob* and *Robert Jacomb*, of *Lothbury*, where constant Attendance shall be given every Day in the Week (*Sundays* and *Holy-Days* excepted) from Nine in the Morning 'till Twelve at Noon, and from Three in the Afternoon 'till Six at Night, for taking Subscription until the Number of 5000 Shares shall be subscribed, each Share to be of the Value of 5*l.* and no more.

2. **UPON** the Subscription One-fifth Part to be paid into the Hands Messieurs, *Thomas Gibson, John Jacob*, and *Robert Jacomb* in *Lothbury*, who shall give a Receipt for the same; and every such Receipt shall intitule the Subscriber or his Order to one or more Share or Shares, according to the Number of Shares that each Person shall subscribe in the said Invention and Undertaking : Each Subscriber to pay the remaining 4*l.* at Four yearly Payments, the first Payment to commence from the time that each respective Share shall be subscribed for, and that a Months Notice at least shall be given in the *Gazette* for each Payment that shall become due from the date of their respective Receipts for the Subscription Money.

3. **THAT** each Subscriber or Sharer who shall refuse or neglect to pay in any of their respective Payments before mentioned, at the respective Days aforesaid or within one Month then next after, shall be from thenceforth actually divested of all Interest in the said Letters Patents, Undertaking and Profits arising thereby ; and such Profits shall be divided amongst the rest of the Parties concern'd, according to their Shares and Parts in the said Undertaking.

4. **THAT** as soon as Directors are chosen, as hereafter mentioned, they shall concert proper Measures for making the first Plantation of Mulberry Trees in *Chelsea* wall'd Park, a piece of Ground proper and taken for that purpose upon Lease for 122 Years.

5. THAT if 500 Shares shall not be subscribed for, and a Fifth Part thereof, paid in, on or before the 25th Day of *December* next, every such Subscriber shall be at liberty to demand and receive again the Money so paid in upon every such Subscription.

6. THAT the whole Shares shall consist of 10000, whereof 5000 Shares shall be for the Benefit of the Patentee and his Assigns, and others concerned; and the other 5000 Shares or so many thereof as shall be subscribed for, shall be the Property and for the Benefit of such Person and Persons respectively, who shall subscribe for the same: And that all and every the neat Profit and Profits arising by the said Stock, Invention and Undertaking, after Payment of all Rent Allowances, Charges and Expences, certain and incident, of or in any wise relating to the said Undertaking, shall be divided into two equal Parts, one Moiety thereof paid to and divided amongst the Subscribers, their Executors, Administrators and Assigns, in Proportion to their several and respective Shares; and the other Moiety shall be paid to the said Patentee and his Assigns, and others concerned or to be concerned, their several Executors, Administrators and Assigns, according to the several Shares and Interest they have in the said Letters Patents and Undertaking, or any Part thereof, or the Profits or Advantages arising thereby.

7. THAT as soon as 500 Shares shall be subscribed for, Notice shall be given in the *Gazette* of the Time and Place for choosing by the Subscribers Seven Directors 10 Days before the Time thereby appointed; at which Time and Place all such Persons as shall have subscribed before that Time for Five Shares, each or more, for carrying on the said Invention and Undertaking, shall and may meet and choose Seven Directors out of the said Subscribers, by Ballotting or otherwise; which Seven Persons so chosen by Majority of the said Subscribers, together with the said Patentee, *Richard Musgrave*, *Jonathan Jarrat* and *Hercules Coyte*, who are hereby declared and agreed to be Directors during their Lives, shall be and be called the Eleven Directors of the said Invention and Undertaking for carrying on and managing the same, to the best Advantage for themselves and the rest of the Subscribers and Proprietors. But no Person or Persons shall be chosen to be One of the said Seven Directors, but such respectively as shall have subscribed or actually have in their own Name and Right Twenty Shares at the least; which Seven Directors chosen by the Subscribers, shall continue so until *Michaelmas*, 1719. on which Day, and on every *Michaelmas*-Day after (unless the same shall fall on a *Sunday*, and in that Case the Day following) Yearly, during the continuance of the said Patent; and from thence for ever after, Seven Directors shall be elected by the Subscribers, in the Manner and for the Purpose aforesaid, provided that such of them the said Patentee, *Richard Musgrave*, *John Jarrat*, and *Hercules Coyte* as shall not have in his own Name and Right 100 Shares in the said Letters Patents and Undertaking, shall from thenceforth cease to be Directors.

8. THAT as soon as the Directors shall be elected, before they shall sit to do Business, they shall give 10 Days Notice in the *Gazette* for the Persons interested to meet to make Choice of a Person to be a Cashier or Treasurer; and that the Person that shall be then elected and chosen by Ballotting or otherwise, by the Majority

Majority then present, shall be Cashier or Treasurer, and shall enjoy the same until *Michaelmas*, 1719. But from and after that Time, and from Time to Time yearly, it shall be in the Power of the said Directors (Three at least of the Directors to be chosen by the Subscribers consenting thereto) to nominate a Cashier or Treasurer, to continue during the Term of one Year: But in regard the Subscribers are according to the Second Article herein contained to pay their First Payment upon Subscribing, it is therefore agreed that in the mean time, and until a Cashier or Treasurer shall be elected and chosen as aforesaid, Messieurs *Thomas Gibson*, *John Jacob* and *Robert Jacomb*, shall be Cashiers for receiving and keeping the same; and that no Money shall be paid or issued out by the said *Thomas Gibson*, *John Jacob* and *Robert Jacomb*, or any Person that shall be hereafter chosen or appointed Cashier or Treasurer, but by order of the Majority of the said Directors, of which Three at least to be of the Directors, chosen by the Subscribers.

9. THAT a General Office be kept in a convenient Place, in or near *London*, where the said Directors shall meet, and where proper Books of the Accompts and other Transactions of and relating to the said Undertaking, shall be fairly enter'd and posted by such Officers and Servants as the said Directors at their Meeting shall appoint; which Books may be inspected *gratis* by any Person interested in the said Stock or Invention, and no Order to be made relating to the same, but what shall be signed by the Majority of the said Directors then present (Three at least of the Directors to be chosen by the Subscribers consenting thereto) and duly enter'd in a Book for that purpose.

10. THAT for Consulting and taking Care of the Welfare of the said Undertaking, the said Directors shall meet every First *Thursday* in every Mon at the said Office: And that Five of them shall be sufficient to make a Board on every Court-Day; and all Matters shall be determined by the Majority of the Directors then present, provided that Three (at least) of the Directors to be chosen by the Subscribers, are consenting to every Determination.

11. THAT the next *Thursday* after every Quarter-Day, *viz.* *Lady-Day*, *Midsummer*, *Michaelmas* and *Christmas*, shall be a General Court-Day, at which all Accompts shall be delivered in at the Board upon Oath (if required) and fairly adjusted.

12. THAT on every Court-Day next after the 29th of *September* yearly, a fair and just dividend shall be settled of the clear Profits (after all Rents, Dutys, Sallarys, and Incident Charges and Expences whatsoever, are deducted) arising from and out of the said Undertaking, and what every Person or Persons Share interested therein shall amount to, the same shall be duly paid within One Month then next following.

13. THAT every Person or Persons that shall at any time be intituled to any of the said 5000 Shares to be subscribed for shall have liberty to sell and transfer any entire Share, provided the same be duly enter'd in a Transfer Book to be kept in the said General Office for that purpose, which Book shall be call'd the Transfer Book for the Subscribers, and shall be kept distinctly from the Transfer Book for the said Patentee, his Executors, Administrators and Assigns, who shall be

be at liberty to sell and dispose of all or any Part of their Shares or Interest in the said Letters Patents, Invention and Undertaking, to such Person or Persons as they or any of them shall think fitting, provided an Entry or Entrys of Sale or Sales, Disposition or Dispositions and when made, be fairly registred and kept in a Book to be called the Transfer Book for the Patentee.

14. THAT the said Directors for the time Being, at their General Court, shall have Power to correct or amend any of the said Articles herein contained; or to add any new or other Article, Clause or Agreement, for the Good and Prosperity of the said Invention and Undertaking as they shall from time to time see convenient, provided Three of the Directors to be chosen by the Subscribers are consenting to such Addition and Amendment. Provided nevertheless, that nothing of that Nature shall be done to prejudice the said Patentee, or the said *R. Musgrave*, *J. Farrat* and *H. Coyte*, their Executors, Administrators or Assigns, or to the prejudice or lessening of their or any of their Interest in the said Undertaking which they are intituled to. And that no Order of the Subscribers shall stand good or be in force to any Purpose whatsoever to lessen or prejudice the Interest of the said Patentee, and his said Assigns, their, or any or either of their Executors, Administrators and Assigns, unless the same shall be first consented to and signed by the said Patentee, and the said *R. Musgrave*, *J. Farrat* and *H. Coyte*, their Executors or Assigns.

15. THAT the Directors or the Majority of them, may appoint such Officers, Clerks and Servants for the carrying on this Undertaking as they shall think necessary; and make them such reasonable Salaries and Allowances for their Pains & Trouble as they shall think fit, provided that Three at least of the Directors be chosen by the Subscribers are consenting thereto.

AND Lastly, That upon the decease of any of them, the said Patentee, *R. Musgrave*, *J. Farrat* and *H. Coyte*, their Executors and Assigns, shall and may in Conjunction with the Subscribers, who are to meet for that Purpose, have Power and Authority to elect a Director or Directors in the Room or Place of the Person or Persons deceased, and so from time to time for ever in the same manner as the Subscribers choose their Directors.



